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26 afternoon, and I would like to welcome my colleagues to the first Rules Committee
27 meeting of the 112th Congress, and the first thing I want to say is how much I look
28 forward to working with our new Ranking Member, Senator Alexander. He has been a
29 great member of this Committee, and as you know, he and I spent a lot of time with our
30 two Leaders, Reid and McConnell, trying to figure out rules changes, and he was always
31 smart and gracious and willing to try and work together. And I know we will be able to
32 do that on many issues as we move forward.

33 On the Republican side, we have two additional new members. First we have
34 Senator Blunt of Missouri, who is here; and then we have the two new kids on the block:
35 Senator Leahy and Senator Shelby, who probably have at least 60 years of seniority in
36 the Senate together, but they are seated--they wanted to remember what it was like to
37 sit at the very end, and here they are. But I have been sitting at the other end of
38 Senator Leahy's Judiciary Committee for a long time, and if I can be half as good a
39 Chairman as he is, I will be happy.
40 Each of our new members, of course, brings a wealth of experience, and I look forward
41 to their participation on the Committee.

42 This year, we have a number of important issues to consider: Senate
43 administration, oversight of legislative and executive branch agencies, legislation,
44 Presidential nominations, and the Senate rules and procedures. And as I mentioned,
45 Senator Alexander and I have already worked closely together on the changes to the

46 Senate rules and procedures that were adopted last month. We are continuing to
47 work with the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee on reducing the
48 number of Presidential appointments that require confirmation, and other members of
49 the Committee, especially Senator Udall, who is here, played key roles in these efforts
50 as well, so we thank him for his many efforts.

51 Senator Alexander and I will work with other members, and we will try to be as
52 bipartisan or nonpartisan as possible, depending on the time, on issues of interest to
53 you. As Senator Udall can tell you, the whole push for rules changes began when he
54 early on last year came over and said, "Why don't we have some hearings?" And the
55 rest is, as they say, history. So that is an open invitation to any member of this
56 Committee on either side. If there are particular issues you are interested in working
57 on, having hearings about, please do not be shy. Let us know.
58 So now I want to turn this over to my friend and the new Ranking Member of this
59 Committee, Senator Alexander, for opening remarks, and then anyone else who wishes
60 to make some remarks, feel free, and maybe particularly this Committee being so novel,
61 we welcome the junior members making remarks even on their first day.
62 Senator Alexander?

63

64 **OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR ALEXANDER**

65 **Senator Alexander.** Thank you. Thanks, Chuck. This is a real honor for me

66 to not just be on the Committee but to be the Ranking Member. In many ways, this is
67 the most important Committee in the Senate because it has a particular responsibility
68 for preserving the Senate as an institution--an institution that deals with the most
69 important issues facing our country and does so in a way that preserves minority rights.
70 And so I take that seriously, and that is the reason I asked to be on the Committee to
71 begin with.

72 Second, I appreciate the chance to work with Chuck Schumer. We have had a
73 busy beginning because of the good work that Senator Udall and others did in raising
74 some questions about the operation of the Senate. We had a good debate after good
75 hearings here. And I think while they did not get everything they proposed, which is
76 usual in the Senate, they created an environment in which we made some real progress
77 in not just changing Senate rules but changing Senate behavior, at least to begin with.

78 So we are off to a good beginning. They have made a real contribution, and we
79 are in the midst of some important changes.

80 I look forward to the legislation that we all worked on together to strengthen the
81 Senate in two ways. One was to make it easier for any President to staff his or her
82 administration. President Kennedy I think had 250 Presidential appointments.
83 President Obama has nearly 1,500 confirmed appointments, which is too many. And,
84 second, there is the phenomenon of innocent until nominated, the idea that we take
85 otherwise respectable Americans and the President invites them to serve in his

86 administration, and they get drawn through a gauntlet of confusing forms that turns
87 them into a criminal by the time they are confirmed or not confirmed.

88 So we are working on both problems with the support of both Leaders and the
89 support of a lot of people, and working on it with Chuck has been a real good experience
90 because he is direct, hard-working, and, I have found, pleasant to work with.

91 Finally, I want to welcome--

92 **Chairman Schumer.** Surprise, surprise, surprise.

93 **Senator Alexander.** No, no, no. About all I need to know is where you are,
94 and it is never hard to find that out from you.

95 [Laughter.]

96 **Senator Alexander.** I would say that our newest members must be the most
97 experienced new members of the Committee in the Senate, maybe in Senate history, I
98 mean, Senator Shelby and Senator Leahy to begin with, and Senator Blunt is no rookie.
99 He has been the whip of the House of Representatives, one of most accomplished new
100 members of the Senate that has come here in a long, long time.

101 So I am delighted to be on the Committee. I look forward to working with
102 Chuck. We have got some important issues to finish.

103 I would just say, Chuck, that we hope to get the legislation we are working on up
104 and going when we come back from recess and move it through the Senate and have
105 something to be proud of.

106 **Chairman Schumer.** Great. Well, thank you, Senator Alexander, and I do
107 truly look forward to working with you.

108 Does anyone else want to make an opening statement? We have nine. We
109 are waiting for Senator Durbin who is evidently on his way. Very nice of him to come.
110 Oh, Senator Inouye is here, our great leader. So we have ten.

111 Why don't we go forward? And then anyone who wants to make an opening
112 statement can do so afterwards, unless our new members would like to say something,
113 since among them they probably have over 100 years of legislative experience.

114 Wouldn't you say? Each of you has been in office at least 30 years, in elected office.

115 [Informal discussion followed before continuing the Organizational Meeting business.]

116 **Senator Leahy.** Thirty-seven, but Senator Inouye has been here longer.

117 **Chairman Schumer.** These are our new members, Mr. Chairman, that young
118 fellow down there and this young guy right here.

119 Please, Senator Shelby.

120 **Senator Shelby.** Mr. Chairman, I do not need a chair today to sit in, but if I do,
121 can I come straight to the Chairman on that request?

122 **Chairman Schumer.** Absolutely. I have served under not Senator Blunt, but I
123 have been a member when Senator Leahy has been Chairman, and still is, of the
124 Judiciary Committee, and a member of Banking when Senator Shelby was Chairman.
125 So I know they know both ends of the game.

126 **Senator Chambliss.** Mr. Chairman?

127 **Chairman Schumer.** Senator Chambliss.

128 **Senator Chambliss.** Can I get some more office space?

129 [Laughter.]

130 **Senator Blunt.** Mr. Chairman, can I get any office space?

131 [Laughter.]

132 **Chairman Schumer.** I think we are about finished.

133 By the way, one of the things we did is we sped up the procedure, and--are we
134 finished yet. Are we finished picking offices?

135 **Ms. Bordewich.** No.

136 **Chairman Schumer.** Who are we up to?

137 **Ms. Bordewich.** We do not say who or what number.

138 **Chairman Schumer.** What number?

139 **Ms. Bordewich.** We are over half done. We are in the 60s.

140 **Chairman Schumer.** We are in the 60s. We are much more than half done, so
141 we should finish in about a month. It used to take until August. For you young
142 members, you may not remember that. One day you guys will get a hideaway.

143 **Senator Nelson.** Well, are hideaways next? Are we going to start bumping in
144 hideaways next?

145 **Chairman Schumer.** Hideaways and extra space come next.

146 **Senator Leahy.** Mr. Chairman? Mr. Chairman, it is a lot better than it used to
147 be. When I first came here 37 years ago, I was the junior-most member of the Senate.
148 I was number 99. There had been a tied race in New Hampshire, and they finally did
149 the race over again, literally.

150 **Chairman Schumer.** That is right.

151 **Senator Leahy.** And myself and the next most junior person had rooms in the
152 basement of the Russell Building. Mine had been a recording studio, so I had that kind
153 of fiberboard with the holes all through it. After about 15 minutes, you were going like
154 this. So I spent a lot of time walking outdoors.

155 **Chairman Schumer.** Well, you are in a little better shape now than you were
156 then, Mr. Chairman.

157 **Senator Leahy.** I am.

158 **Chairman Schumer.** Senator Shelby?

159 **Senator Shelby.** Mr. Chairman, the hideaways, when do we go through those?

160 **Chairman Schumer.** As soon as we finish the offices. So I would say in about
161 a month.

162 **Senator Shelby.** Thank you.

163 **Chairman Schumer.** And there are lots of--what number in seniority are you,
164 Dick?

165 **Senator Shelby.** In the whole Senate?

166 **Chairman Schumer.** Yes. That is how hideaways work.

167 **Senator Shelby.** Maybe 15.

168 **Chairman Schumer.** No, you are higher than that.

169 **Senator Shelby.** Well, I do not know. I might be lower.

170 **Chairman Schumer.** Oh, Senator Blunt, you will get a hideaway as well because
171 everyone gets one now with the Visitor Center.

172 Okay. Why don't we get started?

173 **Senator Blunt.** Mr. Chairman, I am guessing that my hideaway, like my current
174 office, will not have a window.

175 **Chairman Schumer.** Even my hideaway does not have a window yet. It is all
176 done by strict seniority. Being Chairman of Rules entitles you to not much, but glad to
177 be here.

178 [Here Committee Members resumed Organizational Meeting business.]

179 Why don't we begin our agenda? It is adoption of the Committee Rules of
180 Procedure and then the approval of an original resolution which will fund the Rules
181 Committee during the 112th Congress. The Rules of Procedure are the same as the
182 last Congress.

183 The second item on the agenda is the approval of the budget. As many
184 members are aware, the Rules Committee sent a letter to Committee Chairmen and
185 Ranking Members regarding their budgets for the 112th Congress. The letter included

186 guidance from the leadership on the amount of funds that would be available for each
187 committee, and I am pleased to report that our resolution, the Rules Committee
188 resolution, is within these guidelines. I am also pleased to inform the Committee that
189 all other committees will be reporting resolutions that are within the leadership
190 guidelines, so we have had great cooperation among both the Chairs and the Ranking
191 Members of all the committees.

192 So according to the Committee's Rules of Procedure, we need ten members to
193 report legislation. We have them. So we can have a voice vote on the motions
194 unless there is a request for a roll call. So at this time, a quorum is present. Is there
195 any further debate on the two agenda items--the proposed Rules of Procedure or the
196 Rules Committee budget for the next 2 years?

197 **Senator Inouye.** Move to adopt.

198 **Senator Alexander.** Second.

199 **Chairman Schumer.** We have a motion and a second to adopt. Without
200 objection, the Rules of Procedure are adopted.

201 The second question is on the adoption of the original resolution authorizing
202 expenditures for the Rules Committee for the 112th. All in favor say aye?

203 [A chorus of ayes.]

204 **Chairman Schumer.** All opposed, nay?

205 [No response.]

206 **Chairman Schumer.** The ayes have it. Without objection, the original

207 resolution is reported.

208 So, with that, I thank you for your attendance.

209 [Whereupon, at 3:45 p.m., the Committee was adjourned.]